

Through the Mirror by TheDameintheRaininMaine

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Summary:

It's been six years since Will's disappearance, and life has gone back to normal for the most part. But a strange message from someone upstate in a town called Eerie brings hope of the return of an old friend, and the threat of the return of horrors long hoped gone for good.

Through the Mirror

Dustin grabbed Mike at his locker after last period the week before graduation.

"Dude, come with me to the computer lab, you have to see this".

Mike rolls his eyes.

"I swear to God, Dustin, if it's the ASCII porn again..."

"No, it's not, I promise."

The Hawkins High computer lab was empty, as it nearly always was. While their circle of friends had taken to the new addition to the school's curriculum, many of their classmates were not as inclined. But Mr. Clarke had shown them how to dial in to BBS groups using the equipment, and the room had become as familiar to them as his classroom had been.

"Will found this the other day, it's from a group called "weird_things". He's been posting there for a while, about what happened back in junior high, and he showed me this guy's posts earlier..."

He brings up the "Weird Things" list, and spends a few minutes searching.

"Here" he says. The poster's username is "Eerie_teller" and the subject line is "Weirdness in Eerie".

Mike reads through the first few paragraphs. It is, truly weird. Stories about fraternity groups worshiping the TV and a kid's retainer that let him read dog's minds.

The last section catches his eye.

"Weird mirrors.

In the last few weeks my associate and I have been noticing a strange girl in car mirrors around town. Maybe eighteen, thin and gaunt looking. We didn't realize anything was strange until the other day

when she held up a hand and seemed like she tried to grab her way through the mirror. She had the numbers 011 on one wrist. "

Mike freezes.

Dustin notices.

"Will looked the same. You know how he's been. He's never wanted to talk about it at all. That's why I was so surprised he found this thing, that he was writing about it to complete strangers."

"Could it really be her?"

Dustin shrugs.

"After those weeks, I don't consider anything impossible anymore".

"It's been years...do we have anything to go on about this Eerie_teller guy being for real?"

"I sent him a few messages. Did some looking, Eerie's just up the interstate a few hours. Not a lot on it. Pretty ordinary place it seems.
"

Mike's head is spinning. Those weeks...even though they'd been huge, they'd all mostly not talked about it. They all stayed close, friendship tested through the ordeal. Even though Nancy had gone to college and Jonathan had become manager of the music store on Main Street, and school happened and plans changed and nothing could stay the same forever, there were always somethings that bound you together forever.

"If there's any chance..."

"I'm going to wait for him to respond to my messages. Lucas has been going on about wanting to go on a road trip after graduation anyway."

Lucas had been getting wistful about them since college acceptance letters had come in. None of them were even leaving the midwest and it was still the furthest apart that any of them had ever been in years. He'd mentioned wanting to go on a road trip somewhere, but

they'd been arguing about the location. Once Dustin got his responses, and graduation was done, and a week remained before any of them were supposed to go back to their summer jobs, they had their plan.

They had all gathered in front of Mike's house when Lucas pulled up in the dark green beater that he was so proud of buying.

"God man, I can't believe you started working the summer after sophomore year just to buy this thing." Dustin says, tossing his bag in the trunk.

"Hey, at least I spend my summers bagging groceries instead of tearing tickets and coming home smelling like stale popcorn".

"1, I don't spend my summer nearly getting hit by cars. And 2, we both know Mike coming home smelling like he's been molested by a french fry is worse".

Mike goes "Hey!" but they're not wrong. He hated working at the Steak n Shake and couldn't wait to get to college and find something resembling a real job.

Will is silent in the exchange. On the outside, him working for his brother at the music store was easily the best gig any of them had, but he was also the only one who kept his job during the school year, to help out at home.

Dustin commandeers the front seat, and when Mike buckles in next to Will in the back, he asks him.

"Are you sure you're okay coming with us?"

"It's just to another town, and it's not like anyone's forcing me. I'll be fine".

And with that, they drive off.

They stop halfway to have lunch at a burger joint (definitely not a Steak n Shake) and discuss the situation.

"So what exactly do we know about this place?"

Dustin pulls out some papers.

"This is all I could find. Eerie Indiana, population 16,661. Bigger than Hawkins, but not huge. No real major industry, a couple of stores, a factory or two. High school occasionally goes to state in basketball. Town newspaper is appropriately boring. "

"And what about this Eerie_teller guy? Are we driving out to meet some 40 year old living in his mom's basement?" Lucas asks.

"A kid actually. His name is Marshall Teller, he's thirteen. He says his family moved to Eerie a year ago and it seems like sometimes he's the only one who sees anything strange happening, which is why he started posting them on Weird_things".

Lucas rolls his eyes. "So we're taking a kid on a computer forum at his word, that he might have somehow seen Eleven?"

"We were kids then too Lucas" Mike says. "It doesn't mean he's right, but it doesn't mean he's not. And besides, it's not like there's anything else down this stretch of road to see".

"So what's the game plan?" Will wants to know.

"Last message said he would be at a store on main street through about six o'clock today and would talk to us there. So we check him out, if it seems like it's real, we stay, otherwise, we get a motel room and leave in the morning and drive until we find something else interesting".

The rest of the drive is as boring as any drive in Indiana. When they get close to the turn off for Eerie, there are turns to empty fields and abandoned looking buildings for a bit.

Just as they pass the city limits sign, Will jerks in the seat next to Mike.

"What's up?"

Will pauses for a long moment, before saying "nothing...could of swore I saw a huge crow on that sign holding something in his beak. Must be imagining things".

Eerie is, as described, an extremely boring town. Neat rows of houses with perfect lawns, neat rows of non-chain stores on Main Street, people who all seem to have come out of some kind of mold.

"Well this place definitely fits it's name", Dustin says, staring out the window at a man by a house picking up his newspaper. "Was that..."

"I'll say" Lucas responds, eyes glued onto the sight of a passing group of teenagers bouncing basketballs, seemingly all in unison.

While the outside of the World O' Stuff looks like an average drug store, the inside is far larger, more crowded, and more varied than any store in Hawkins. They spend some time exploring, waiting for Marshall to come. The store does, indeed, contain a great variety of stuff.

Lucas claps Mike on the back at one point, ducking behind him.

"Dude, that clerk creeps me out".

The older man looks friendly enough, but there's something about his eyes. They seem somehow too big, or like they aren't looking at what they should be.

"Ignore Mr. Radford," a voice says. "He's kind of strange, but harmless. This Mr. Radford anyway..."

The voice belongs to a boy of about thirteen, with dark hair. He's accompanied by a slightly younger boy with curly hair.

"Are you the guys from Hawkins?"

Mike nods.

Marshall gestures to the bar stools on the side of the shop counter.

"Pull up a stool. Mr. Radford, brown cows all around today, on me".

While the group is all sipping their drinks, Marshall tells them the story of how he became the unofficial investigator of all things weird in Eerie.

"We moved here from New Jersey. I noticed things being off right away, I thought maybe it was just because I was so used to New Jersey. I mean- compared to Jersey, this place is a mayonnaise on white bread sandwich".

"You can say that again" Lucas says, snorting, still eying Mr. Radford down the counter.

"So me and my friend Simon here, we started gathering evidence. Anytime something strange happened, we would try to be there, to tell what happened."

"What kind of evidence?" Dustin asks, already finished with his soda.

"There's a sandwich that was in special Tupperware that went bad in a single night after thirty years. I have a piece of a friend's retainer that let him hear the thoughts of dogs. And there was this thing with this script I found..."

Marshall pauses, and glances at Simon, who shakes his head.

The other four exchange glances of their own.

"Not the be condescending", Dustin starts.

"But excuse us if we're a little bit unbelieving". Lucas finishes.

"Yeah, none of that sounds like what you described in your message to us, the thing with the mirrors". Mike adds.

"It's okay", Marshall says, "No one else really believes us. But I told you, we keep evidence. If you want to, we can show you-"

He's cut off by a girl with red hair who's come up to the counter suddenly.

"Janet, what-"

"It's happening again, like I told you before."

It's just then that Mike notices that Will, who's been quiet so far, has suddenly gone pale and started making strange retching noises.

"Will? Will are you okay?" he says, while Lucas reaches over to shake him by the shoulder.

Will turns his face upwards, watching the ceiling.

He watches just as the in the store- the one in the ceiling, the smaller ones on the walls, even the lights on the handful of small electronics, start to flicker, on and off.